



UNIVERSITY OF
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College of
Education

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It's Spring, which means we are celebrating the incredible growth and achievements of College of Education students as they near the finish line for this academic year. As a College of Education donor, you are an important part of the community that strengthens each of our students' dedication to achieving their goals and beginning the next chapter of their life. We are excited to share a few stories of students who benefited from direct support of their education from donors like you.

Student Spotlight



Alex Newson, MS '17

Special Education Doctoral Candidate, Class of 2024

Alex Newson is a Special Education doctoral candidate, expected to graduate this June. Alex left her career as a special education teacher to join the doctoral program at the College of Education. She was drawn to aiding and advancing the lives of autistic individuals after her brother was diagnosed with autism and she began advocating for his education accommodations. Alex is the 2023-24 recipient of the **Helena Degnath Wessela Memorial Scholarship**, established by Conrad Wessela in 1990 in memory of his wife, Helena Degnath Wessela. The scholarship provides financial assistance to students who are preparing to work with those who are mentally or physically disabled.

Read More about Alex's work,
featured in OPB

"I believe my skills as an autistic educator can assist me in creating meaningful research to benefit students and community partners within the autistic community while bridging the research-to-practice gap. During my first year in the PhD program, I worked alongside special education faculty to hone my skills as a researcher, teacher, and collaborator with the local community. I aim to foster a collaborative, equitable system of research and professional practice that will be a launching point for autistic individuals to have all parts of their personhood validated in education to best meet their needs, create positive relationships, and promote overall success." -Alex Newson, MS '17, Special Education Doctoral Candidate, Class of 2024



Samantha Martinez

Educational Foundations, Class of 2025

Samantha Martinez is an Educational Foundations student and a former HEDCO Institute undergraduate scholar. Samantha's time as a HEDCO Institute undergraduate Scholar equipped her with the tools to translate research into accessible resources. It helped shape her career aspirations in education, research, and policy and her commitment to promoting educational equity and excellence. After completing her studies, Samantha plans to build a foundation in the classroom with the ultimate goal of serving on the board of education to create positive changes in the education system. Samantha is a recipient of scholarships funded by annual donations to the **College of Education Scholarship Fund**.

**Read More about Samantha in
our Student Spotlight Series**

"Thank you so much for supporting me and my educational journey. Without you a lot of my dreams would not be possible, and I hope you know how truly appreciated you are. You are changing lives and making the impossible possible." -Samantha Martinez, Educational Foundations, Class of 2025



We're gearing up for **Ducks Give 2024**, the University of Oregon's ninth annual giving day. This 24-hour campaign is a university-wide effort to inspire alumni, parents, and friends like you to support areas of campus they're passionate about. The College of Education has three funds focused on student success and support, and we invite you to join us in reaching our goal of **150 gifts by donating \$5 or more** and sharing this initiative with your friends, family, and colleagues. More details will be shared on our website and social media pages.



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Hannah St. Clair, a UOTeach student and National Education Association (NEA) member, hosted a session at the NEA Leadership Summit the first weekend of March in Chicago, IL. Hannah is a recipient of the **A. Donald and Dorothy Carlson Parr Scholarship** which supports undergraduate students pursuing elementary teaching.

[Read more about Hannah's experience](#)

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University of Oregon College of Education | 1655 Alder Street, Eugene, OR 97403

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